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THESIS

**“ISM” ANALYSIS: A NECESSITY FOR EFFECTIVE
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

by

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September 2008

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**“ISM” ANALYSIS: A NECESSITY FOR EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION**

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ABSTRACT

Ideas have consequences. This simple yet sufficient principle comes from a philosophical work of the same name by Richard M. Weaver, published in 1948. In this book, Weaver refers to the “channels of information and entertainment” as the “Great Stereopticon.” The purpose of this “machine” is to “project selected pictures of life in the hope that what is seen will be imitated.” According to Weaver, the audience is growing and so is their responsiveness to being “told the time to laugh and the time to cry.” The media understand this concept and looks to wield choice words, in the information domain, in order to manage a certain perception, in the cognitive domain, through an active process called framing. This thesis postulates a correlation exists between a given area’s system of belief and the framing by the local media of certain events. In order to determine if this correlation exists, this thesis looked specifically at events in Iraq and the framing of these events by the media in and around Dearborn (Michigan), which has the highest density population of Muslims in the U.S. This study establishes a methodology for deciphering the layers of public information that inform and solidify theses views.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. FORWARD

Ideas have consequences. This simple yet sufficient principle comes from a philosophical work of the same name by Richard M. Weaver, published in 1948. In this book, Weaver refers to the “channels of information and entertainment” as the “Great Stereopticon” (Weaver, p. 93). The purpose of this “machine” is to “project selected pictures of life in the hope that what is seen will be imitated” (Weaver, p. 93). Technology is the Great Stereopticon’s center of gravity. With its ever-increasing range and availability, it makes for a grand audience that is growing more responsive to being “told the time to laugh and the time to cry” (Weaver, p. 93). As a warning to those of us that wish to influence others, it can be applied directly to our means of strategic communication, information operations, information warfare, public affairs, or psychological operations. The best and brightest in the media understand this concept as well and look to wield choice words to be projected in the information domain in order to manage a certain idea or perception in the cognitive domain.

Writer, journalist, and political commentator, Walter Lippmann fully understood the importance of not just what a news media outlet says but how it says it that matters. According to Lippmann and many others, this determines a story’s (or even a news outlet’s) acceptance or rejection by the consumer. In *Public Opinion*, Lippmann had much to say about the influence of newspapers in 1922 that highlights this point.

The newspaper deals with a multitude of events beyond our experience. But it deals also with some events within our experience. And by its handling of those events we most frequently decide to like it or dislike it, to trust it or refuse to have the sheet in our house. If the newspaper gives a satisfactory account of that which we think we know, our business, our church, our party, it is fairly certain to be immune from violent criticism by us. What better criterion does the man at the breakfast table possess than that the newspaper version checks up with his own opinion? Therefore,

most men tend to hold the newspaper most strictly accountable in their capacity, not of general readers, but of special pleaders on matters of their own experience (Lippmann, 329).

Fifty years later, Mortimer J. Adler, philosopher, author, and former Board of Editors member for Encyclopedia Britannica, revised and updated his famous tome, *How to Read a Book*. In this volume, Adler seems to share the same sentiment as Lippmann. Not only does Adler expand criticism beyond newspapers, he also presents to us an excellent example of how words become ideas:

The viewer of television, the listener to radio, the reader of magazines, is presented with a whole complex of elements – all the way from ingenious rhetoric to carefully selected data and statistics – to make it easy for him to “make up his own mind” with the minimum of difficulty and effort. But the packaging is often done so effectively that the viewer, listener, or reader does not make up his mind at all. Instead, he inserts a packaged opinion into his mind, somewhat like inserting a cassette into a cassette player. He then pushes a button and “plays back” the opinion whenever it seems appropriate to do so. He has performed acceptably without having had to think (Adler, 4).

If Lippmann and Adler’s assessments are correct, it begs the question – why is it so? What is it about consumers that they would rather see their own point of view reinforced vice hearing, seeing, or listening to multiple takes on a given issue, reflecting on the matter, and truly “making up [their] own mind”? Some may argue it is *time* that keeps us from thinking critically about what the media presents and how they make their presentations. However, because this is not necessarily the case and it does not explain why someone chooses one “channel” over another to begin with, there has to be more to the matter than just time available. Perhaps it is something we as consumers *bring* to the equation, instead of what we lack.

Every media “consumer” has a point of view about the realities of the world we live in, whether they know it or not. Some views of the world are well thought out, highly developed, and offer a compelling case for how the world is

and how we should live in this world. Other views of the world are underdeveloped, disjointed, and poorly understood, falling prey to the first person with the ability to uncover the logical conclusions that naturally flow to an absurd ending. Regardless, everyone relies on their view to make sense of life and to comprehend their surroundings. In many academic circles, this is referred to as a worldview.

Worldview, derived from the German word *Weltanschauung*, refers to a collection of beliefs a person holds about the most important matters of life – such as God, the cosmos, knowledge, values, humanity, and history (Samples, p. 20). In identifying a term that speaks of a ‘worldview’, one only need look at the end of a given word, and there are countless examples of this – from absolutism, Buddhism, Humanism, and capitalism, to Pluralism, utilitarianism, verificationism, and Zoroastrianism. Notice at the end of each of these words is the suffix *-ism*. A quick search on Wikipedia will reveal “-ism” as a noun-forming suffix that changes a root word into a system of thought, a way of looking at things. For example, the word human becomes Humanism, plural becomes Pluralism, and relative becomes Relativism. Admittedly, this is not always the case. Take Islam or Christianity for example; seldom do you see Islam referred to as ‘Islamism’ while you never see Christianity called ‘Christianism.’ It is also the case, though not often; that you will discover a system of belief that goes by several names, such as Cosmic Humanism, better known as New Age.

It is reasonable to believe that when the media uses words and ideas in a manner that correlates with an audience’s worldview a synergistic relationship forms. The product for the viewer is a reinforcement of beliefs and values, while for the media it is a more loyal viewer, an increased audience, and a demand for information they hope to provide.

If it is indeed the case, that the local media frames issues and events supportive to a given area’s system of belief, we will have at our disposal a means to determine how we should phrase and deliver our own messages. It will prove that we must come to understand the presupposition of a given area’s

system of belief and that we must learn to frame issues and events in a way the reinforces the beliefs that are conducive to mission accomplishment, will circumvent the beliefs that hinder our mission, or a combination of the two.

B. THESIS OVERVIEW

1. Scope of the Study

This thesis postulates that there is a correlation between a given area's system of belief and the framing by the local media of certain topics or events. This thesis will look specifically at events in Iraq and the framing of these events by the media in and around Dearborn (Michigan), which has the highest density population of Muslims in the U.S.

If a correlation does exist, as an integral part to Strategic Communication, Intelligence Preparation of the Battle-space (IPB) for Information Operations (IO) and/or Information Warfare (IW), Public Affairs (PA), and Psychological Operations (PSYOP), it is an imperative to know and understand the presuppositions that define a worldview. With this knowledge and understanding, we can produce, distribute and respond to themes and messages in a manner likely to reinforce deeply held beliefs that we find advantageous to our efforts and mitigate the risk of violating, to our detriment, the conscience of those we seek to influence.

2. Structure of the Study

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter I provides an overview of the thesis. The second chapter gives a background of three key concepts, some important definitions, and a little history behind some of these concepts. The third chapter narrows our focus to one particular system of belief, or worldview, a location within the U.S. in which it appears this worldview is thriving, three newspapers that circulate through this location, and two event reported on by all three newspapers. Chapter IV details the collection of data derived from the

interpretation and frame analysis of reports produced and delivered by the three chosen media outlets and seeks to determine if there is a correlation with the prevailing worldview in a given location. The fifth chapter reports the findings of the analysis. The final chapter draws conclusions from the findings and outlines future scope for study.

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II. BACKGROUND

A. KEY CONCEPTS

1. Framing (System of Media Frame Analysis)

a. Definition

'Framing' is used in many areas of social inquiry. The concept of framing can be found in "linguistics, social psychology, media studies, and policy studies, and it is also used by sociologists and political scientists who study social movements" (Noakes, pg. 3).

Erving Goffman, probably the most oft referenced sociologist on the subject, characterized frames as follows:

I assume that definitions of a situation are build up in accordance with principals of organization which govern events...and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify (König).

In reference to Goffman, Thomas König, a Social Sciences professor at Loughborough University, states, "in other words, frames are basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality. On the whole, frames are not consciously manufactured but are unconsciously adopted in the course of communicative processes" (König).

According to John Noakes and Hank Johnston, a frame is an "interpretative schema that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating the encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of action" (Noakes, p. 3). This definition is not a novel conceptualization but borrowed from a 1988 article by Professors of Sociology, David Snow and Robert Benford.

In a 1993 article in the *Journal of Communication*, Robert Entman stated, “[t]o frame is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.” In his book *Projections of Power*, Entman seems to maintain the spirit of his original definition by offering the following “stab” at a standard definition of framing: *selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution* (Entman, p. 5).

At the time of this writing, there appears to be no single dominant definition. What is certain among these sociologists is that framing does exist. What is not so certain from the various definitions is whether framing is an unconscious guide, as Goffman and König claim, or an active selection process, according to Snow and Entman. A brief history of framing will shed some light on where this concept is heading.

b. A Brief History

British anthropologist, Gregory Bateson, is credited with first using the concept of frames in a 1954 essay on epistemology and animal behavior (Noakes, p. 3). Eighteen years later, Goffman’s seminal book, *Frame Analysis*, introduced this concept to the field of sociological research. This was followed in 1980 by Todd Gitlin’s book, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Gitlin was able to demonstrate “how the *New York Times* negatively portrayed the [Students for Democracy Society] in news stories by applying several negative frames” (Noakes, p. 188). By 1981, Goffman had expanded his analysis research and was now arguing that there existed layers of framing. From this point on, he focused his work on “linguistic analysis of conversational conventions that mark the application and changes in interpretive frames” (Noakes, p. 188).

The very next year William Gamson, Bruce Fireman, and Steven Rytina wrote *Encounters with Unjust Authority* in which they conducted research that focused on the emergence of a frame, “of a shared understanding of “what’s going on” that they labeled an “injustice frame,” and how collective recognition of this frame was essential for rebellion against authority” (Noakes, p. 187).

Within that same year, David Snow and several colleagues discussed an improvised and “processual” quality of sketch-map frames by elaborating frame alignment processes. The details of this work are not important, what is important is that these ideas were in line with most scholars of the day, to include the most significant scholar Erving Goffman. However, continuing work by Snow moved the framing perspective to a more fixed conception of collective action frames and established a new perspective on the role of social-psychological processes. *Frame resonance*, as a fixed concept for example, linked a social movement organization’s frame to existing beliefs and values of a target audience. Snow argued that by “strategically framing” a movement’s position in accordance with dominant values and folk beliefs, the social movement organization could bring forth greater participation. Thus far Snow and his collaborators’ (most notably Robert Benford) work has been the most influential in subsequent research and has arguably lead to a more complete understanding of frames and framing processes.

By the 1990’s, Entman had defined framing in the media as a process through which some aspects of reality are chosen and become more significant in the text. More to the point, media frames are patterns of representation and interpretation of symbols and themes that organize the discourse. He went on to identify four important factors in the framing process: *the problem, the cause of the problem, moral judgment, and a solution*. Though a decade later, Entmans’ definition of framing has changed slightly, he still holds to these four factors. For the remainder of this study, the definition and,

particularly, these four ‘factors’ provided by Entman will be our system of frame analysis – to identify the problem, the cause of the problem, the moral judgment made or implied, and the solution(s).

Before we move on, though, it is important to note again the fundamental transition that has taken place in the concept of framing. With Goffman, frames were “*principles* of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters” (König). For him, “framing is an innate property of all social processes, not only those most consciously manufactured” (König). But as König points out, “[p]articularly within media studies, it has become commonplace to treat the choice of frames as a more or less deliberate process,” as Snow claims, and that this has lead to a shift towards the “active *selection* of frames,” as Entman proves (König). The system of analysis drawn out from Entman’s work, evaluates these “active” frames.

2. How to Read a Book (System of Interpretation)

In 1940, Mortimer Adler published *How to Read a Book*. Since then it has remained in print in both hardcover and paperback, and has been translated into numerous languages. Adler devoted many years to teaching students at Columbia University how to “read for understanding” vice “the acquisition of information.” A backdrop to accomplishing this task was having his student read some of the most challenging works of Western civilization: Aristotle, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, John Locke, Karl von Clausewitz, John Stewart Mill, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and many more. In his book, he explains in detail the four levels of reading – Elementary, Inspectional, Analytical, and Syntopical. Our system of properly interpreting a text comes directly from Adler’s work on Analytical Reading, specifically, the sections titled “Coming to Terms with the Author” and “Determining the Author’s Message.” The reason behind detailing such as system is simple; in order to come to a correct conclusion about a text one must have in place a methodology that justifies his interpretation.

a. Coming to Terms

In the business world, “coming to terms” is usually the final step in the negotiations process and once that is accomplished, all that is left is to “sign on the dotted line” (Adler, p. 96). When it comes to analytical reading, understanding the terms must come first in the process of gaining knowledge. This is essential to the proper interpretation of any text and unless the terms are understood, the communication of knowledge from author to reader cannot take place, “for a term is the basic element of communicable knowledge” (Adler, p. 96).

(1) Words vs. Terms. In the movie, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, which is based on George Crile’s book, actor Ned Beatty plays the role of Democratic Congressman, Clarence Dickinson Long (a.k.a. ‘Doc’ Long). In a tragicomic scene, Doc and his wife take a tour of a refugee camp in Afghanistan that emerges due to the Soviet invasion of this country (Crile, p. 191). This scene is tragic because of the plight of the Afghans and yet comical as the Congressman stumbles around the camp in his finely tailored suit, which seems to enhance his ignorance of what he was actually going to see.

Appalled at what he has witnessed, Doc pledges U.S. support in the way of money and weapons to help the Mujahedeen fight the Soviets. This news excites the crowd and they begin to chant “Allahu Akbar” (Crile, p. 191). Doc joins in the chant with “God is good” as a translator repeats his every word – “Allahu Akbar.” ‘Allahu Akbar’ actually translates to ‘God is great’ but that is not the point of this analogy. The focus is on the word ‘God’ or ‘Allah’ in this encounter between the Congressman and the refugees.

Based on the dialogue that took place prior to the chanting of “Allahu Akbar,” it is obvious Doc is chanting for a much different concept of God than that of the refugees. Though both the American and the Afghans were using the same words they had failed to come to terms with what the other was saying, this too was tragicomic. One cannot help but wonder what a difference it

would have made if the Congressman had made the point that he was cheering for the Trinitarian God of the Bible vice the Unitarian God of the Qur'an.

Admittedly, three points can be made about this analogy. Either, (1) it was not important for either party to 'come to terms,' (2) it was helpful that they had not 'come to terms,' or (3) both points are valid, for there was no need to 'come to terms' and to do so would have been harmful. The latter of the three seems best, however, it does point out an important rule when thinking critically about something said or, for the purpose of this study, written: *Find the key words and through them identify the terms being used.*

(2) Finding the Key Words. Now that we have a rule to build upon, the question of how we go about identifying the key or important words inevitably arises. Certainly, and thankfully, not all words are important but it is a fact that some words are more important than others. When reading, almost instinctively, we are familiar with and can identify words of everyday discourse, their ambiguity and variations in meaning as they occur in a certain context. Because of this familiarity – through the common use of prepositions, conjunctions, and articles, and a great deal of verbs, nouns, adverbs, and adjectives – our search is immediately narrowed. We understand how these elements have been brought together to form a passage and because we understand the passage we know we understand the words.

The antithesis of understanding is ignorance or unawareness. If one comes to a passage that he does not understand, this is an indication that he may be unaware of the use of certain words. Therefore, the important words are those that give the reader trouble and their meaning must be discovered.

(3) Finding the Meaning. For the 'troubling' words that have been identified, there are two primary possibilities: (1) the word stands for a single term or (2) the word stands for several terms. With these two alternatives in mind, one should then proceed in determining whether each word has one or multiple meanings. If you have a word of multiple meanings, use the context of

the writing to see if it provides any clues as to the author's use of the word. It should not be assumed that once a proper meaning has been discovered that a word's meaning could not or should not shift. In short, if a key word appears in many places never fail to return to the context to ensure the word has not shifted in meaning.

There is no easy way to go about this. Just as one must proceed negatively by eliminating the ordinary words in order to identify the key words, one must also use the meanings of all the other words in a context he does understand in order to discover the meaning of a word he does not understand. Mortimer Adler offers the following illustration as typical of the process by which we acquire meanings.

Consider a definition. A definition is stated in words. If you do not understand any of the words in the definition, you obviously cannot understand the meaning of the word that names the thing defined. The word "point" is a basic word in geometry. You may think you know what it means (in geometry), but Euclid wants to be sure you use it in only one way. He tells you what he means by first defining the thing he is later going to use the word to name. He says: "A point is that which has no parts." How does this help to bring you to terms with him? You know, he assumes, what every other word in the sentence means with sufficient precision. You know that whatever has parts is a complex whole. You know that the opposite of complex is simple. To be simple is the same as to lack parts. You know that the use of the words "is" and "that which" means that the thing referred to must be an entity of some sort. Incidentally, it follows from all this that, if there are no physical things without parts, a point, as Euclid speaks of it, cannot be physical (Adler, p. 107).

b. Determining the Messages

In a business environment, propositions are made, once the proposition is found to be attractive, those parties involved can work on the terms of the deal. As stated earlier, though, analytical reading works in the opposite direction. First, we must come to terms with the author before we can ascertain

the sense of his propositions. Propositions are brought together to form arguments, arguments lead to conclusions, and conclusion may lead to solutions.

(1) Sentences vs. Proposition. Sentences and paragraphs are grammatical units, or units of language. Propositions and arguments are logical units. They are units of thought and knowledge. Not all sentences convey a proposition; consider the case of a stated question or problem. On the other hand, sentences that *answer* the question or make a *declaration* of knowledge or opinion are propositions. Unfortunately, not all declarative sentences can be read as if they are expressing a single proposition. Adler makes this point very clear by showing how a compound sentence can express numerous propositions.

Let us take an interesting sentence from Machiavelli's *The Prince* to show what we mean:

A prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he abstains from the property of his citizens and from their women.

This is grammatically a *single* sentence, though it is extremely complex. The semicolon and the "because" indicate that major break in it. The first proposition is that a prince ought to inspire fear in a certain way. Beginning with the word "because," we have what is in effect another sentence. (It could be made independent by saying: "The reason for this is that he can endure," and so forth.) And this sentence expresses two propositions at least: (1) the reason why the prince ought to inspire fear in a certain way is that he can endure being feared so long as he is not hated; (2) he can avoid being hated only by keeping he hands off the property of his citizens and their women (Adler, pp. 118-119).

In analyzing a message of any sort, it is very important that we identify the propositions. Without them, we cannot be certain what knowledge the author is trying to expound. This leads us to our second important rule: *Mark the most important sentences and discover the propositions they contain.*

(2) Finding the Key Sentences. From the reader's point of view, it is an essential part of analytical reading, as Adler puts it, *to be perplexed and know it*. Sentences that are not immediately intelligible require some effort of interpretation – these are important sentences. It is not necessarily the case that these are also the important sentences for the author, but they are like to be because they are the most important things the author has to say.

From the point of view of the author, the important sentences are “the ones that express the judgment on which his whole argument rests” (Adler, p. 121). In other words, “the heart of his communication lies in the major affirmations and denials he is making, and the reasons he gives for so doing” (Adler, p. 121). Some authors make the task of identifying key sentences very simple. Euclid, for example, labels every proposition that is to be proved. Thomas Aquinas, in *Summa Theologica*, indicates to the reader that reasons and conclusions will follow with the words, “I answer that.” Often, though, we have to rely on more subtle clues in order to identify the important sentences.

The first clue has already been addressed – if a reader is “sensitive to the difference between passages he can understand readily and those he cannot, he will probably be able to locate the sentences that carry the main burden of meaning” (Adler, p. 123). The second clue is drawn out of from our rule of locating the important words and coming to terms. If one has already marked the key words, it is likely the sentences in which they reside deserve more attention. The final clue is those sentences that belong to the main argument of the overall message, either in the form of a premise or a conclusion.

(3) Finding the Propositions. Once the leading sentences have been identified, one must go on to discover the proposition or propositions that each sentence contains. In other words, one must understand what the sentence means. This is where context can be of much help.

How one brings context to a single sentence is quite simple. With respect to the sentence in question, read the sentences that come before it and those that follow it. What is taking place in the process of adding context is

that the reader proceeds from what he does understand to a gradual illumination of what was at first somewhat unintelligible.

The process of finding the propositions brings us back to the example from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Recall that some sentences can contain multiple propositions. For "you have not completed your interpretation of an important sentence until you have separated out of it all the different, though perhaps related, propositions" (Adler, p. 125). Like all difficult tasks, proficiency in this comes with practice.

(4) Finding the Arguments. Adler presents a short rule for this section of determining the author's message: *Locate or construct the basic arguments by finding them in the connection of sentences*. These "connection of sentences" are paragraphs. Since there is no single accepted convention on how to construct paragraphs, Adler has taken his original rule and expanded it considerably:

Find if you can the paragraphs that state its important arguments; but if the arguments are not thus expressed, your task is to construct them, by taking a sentence from this paragraph, and one from that, until you have gathered together the sequence of sentences that state the propositions that compose the argument (Adler, pp. 129-130).

It is most likely the case when analyzing media reports or articles that this expanded rule will be most helpful. The problem of constructing the argument can be compounded if the writer omits steps in his argument. Admittedly, some steps can be determined via common knowledge of the reader, however, if these missing steps mislead the reader, proper interpretation can be hindered. If the intention is to mislead, Adler warns, "one of the most familiar tricks of the orator or propagandist is to leave certain things unsaid, things that are highly relevant to the argument, but that might be challenged if they were made explicit" (Adler, p. 131). With this in mind, we must make every effort to determine every step in an argument.

(5) Finding the Solutions. The final rule in determining the author's message is this: *Find out what the author's solutions are*. In order to do

this, Adler suggest the reader address questions to himself. “Which of the problems that the author tried to solve did he succeed in solving? In the course of solving these, did he raise any new ones? Of the problems that he failed to solve, old or new, which did the author himself know he had failed on?” (Adler, p. 135)

(6) Recap of the Rules. Properly interpreting a message, be it in the form of an article, or, as Adler originally intended, a book is key to implementing our system of media frame analysis drawn out from Entman’s work. Without such a system of interpretation, there is no justification behind the four factors in our frame analysis. In summary, our system of interpretation does not rely on order, only the application of the rules themselves matter:

- Come to terms with the author by interpreting his key words.
- Grasp the author’s leading propositions by dealing with his most important sentences.
- Know the author’s arguments, by finding them in, or constructing them out of, sequences of sentences.
- Determine which of his problems the author has solved, and which he has not; and as to the latter, decide which the author knew he had failed to solve.

3. Worldview

a. Definition

The Universe Next Door, by Dr. James W. Sire, offers this definition:

A worldview is commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being (Sire, p. 17).

Sire goes on to unpack this definition because “[e]ach phrase represents a specific characteristic that deserves more elaborate comment” (Sire, p. 17).

Worldview as a commitment. Although it involves the mind it is not just a matter of the mind, it is first and foremost a commitment, a spiritual orientation, or matter of the heart. The *heart* in this case is considered “the central defining element of the human person...that one’s thoughts and actions proceed” (Sire, p. 18).

Expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions. “A worldview is not a story or a set of presuppositions, but it can be expressed that way” (Sire, p. 18). Sire explains when a person reflects on where he and the whole of the human race have come from or where his life or humanity itself is headed, a worldview is being expressed as a story. And though there may be many chapters to the story “those little stories cannot be divorced from the master story, and some of this meaning is propositional” (Sire, p. 18). So when, for example, someone reflects on what they are assuming about ultimate reality, humans and the universe, “the result is a set of presuppositions that can be expressed in propositional form” (Sire, p. 18).

Assumptions which may be true, conscious, consistent. Sire sums up concisely what the options are in three brief statements. First, “[t]he presuppositions that express one’s commitments may be true, partially true or entirely false” (Sire, p. 19). Second, “sometimes we are aware of what our commitments are, sometimes not” (Sire, p. 19). Third, “sometimes our worldviews are inconsistent” (Sire, p. 19).

The foundation on which we live. According to Sire’s definition, our worldview is what we show it to be by our words and actions and it therefore may not necessarily be what we think it to be. In short, “our very actions may belie our self-understanding” (Sire, p. 19).

b. A Brief History

The notable Prussian philosopher, Immanuel Kant, first coined the term *Weltanschauung* (Worldview) in his work *Critique of Judgment* published in 1790.

If the human mind is nonetheless to *be able even to think* the given infinite without contradiction, it must have within itself a power that is supersensible, whose idea of the noumenon cannot be intuited but can yet be regarded as the substrate underlying what is mere appearance, namely, our intuition of the world [*Weltanschauung*]. For only by means of this power and its idea do we, in a pure intellectual estimation of magnitude, comprehend the infinite in the world of sense *entirely under* a concept, even though in a mathematical estimation of magnitude *by means of numerical concepts* we can never think it in its entirety (Naugle, pp. 58-59).

Kant had already launched a Copernican revolution in philosophy, with his emphasis on the “knowing and willing self as the cognitive and moral center of the universe” (Naugle, p. 58). To some it appears this may have served as a catalyst “in which the notion of worldview could flourish” (Naugle, p. 59).

No doubt influenced by Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel showed an interest in *Weltanschauung* early in his career and “served as his term of choice to convey an important idea with the framework of dialectical thought” (Naugle, p. 69). In 1801, in his first published work titled *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*, Hegel writes: “Reason then unites this objective totality with the opposite subjective totality to form the infinite world-intuition [*unendlichen Weltanschauung*], whose expansion has at the same time contracted into the richest and simplest identity” (Naugle, p. 69).

In 1807, Hegel made more significant use of ‘worldview’ in *Phenomenology of Mind* to present the “essential parameters of his philosophical system” (Naugle, p. 69). Based primarily on his lectures from the winter of 1830-1831, in *Philosophy of History*, he “suggests that worldviews are embedded in both the individual and national consciousness” (Naugle, p. 70). Hegel’s use of this term continues throughout his publications to include *Lectures on the*

Philosophy of Religion and Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art. Professor of Philosophy, David Naugle, points out that “[f]rom these early beginnings, *Weltanschauung* took deep root and branched out, especially among a number of prominent intellectuals such as Friedrich Schleiermacher (1799), A. W. Schlegel (1800), Novalis (1801), Jean Paul (1804), Joseph Görres (1807), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1815), and others” (Naugle, p. 61). It appears Hegel was no exception.

Making its way rather quickly to the Scandinavian region, “by 1838 Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) had heard and embraced the term, coined its Danish counterpart, and employed it in his first published work” (Naugle, p. 73). In *From the Papers of One Still Living*, a cutting review of Hans Christian Anderson’s *Only a Fiddler*, Kierkegaard showed that he preferred the term *livsanskuelse* (lifeview) over *verddensanskuelse* (worldview) because “it best captured the existential character of his philosophy” but he did on occasion use these terms synonymously (Naugle, p. 75). He continued to discuss the issue of lifeviews in such works as *Attack on “Christendom”*, *Either/Or*, *Stages on Life’s Way*, and *Concluding Unscientific Postscripts*.

Best known for his theories of the human sciences, Wilhelm Dilthey also provided us with a pioneering, systematic treatment of worldviews. In *Wilhelm Dilthey: The Critique of Historical Reason*, author and Dartmouth Professor of History, Michael Ermarth had this to say:

It was Dilthey who raised the problem of the world-view to a comprehensive theoretical statement. In this area, he pioneered and mapped intellectual terrain, which was later to be explored by students in many different disciplines. His writings provide full-scale treatment of the genesis, articulation, comparison, and development of the world-view. His doctrine or “science” of the world-view, which is frequently treated as a marginal dimension of this thought, is in reality one of its fundamental elements and requires careful analysis in its own right (Naugle, p. 84).

Dilthey, referred by many as the father of worldview theory, considered it “the task of the theory of worldviews, by analyzing the historical

course of religiosity, poetry, and metaphysics in opposition to relativity, systematically to present the relationship of the human mind to the riddle of the world and life” (Naugle, p. 84).

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was considered “not only the *terminus ad quem* of the nineteenth century but also the *terminus a quo* of the twentieth” (Naugle, p. 94). According to Nietzsche, the ongoing themes of his time – the titanic self, the omni-competent mind, historicism, biological evolutionism, and drastic relativism – was an indication of the death of the “myth of God.” Essential to his appraisal of the times were the interrelated ideas of *Weltanschauung* and perspectivism. This gave rise to such philosophical concepts as *Übermensch*, Dionysianism, transvaluationism, linguisticism, and aestheticism, which Nietzsche “deployed to rescue moderns who were threatened by the encroaching floodwaters of nihilism” (Naugle, p. 84). In short, Nietzsche worked diligently to present a view of the world that had explanatory power over and against other concepts and to hasten the death of God, “whose existence had undergirded Western civilization for nearly two millennia” (Naugle, p. 94).

It is all too evident the effect Immanuel Kant and ‘worldview’ as a concept has had on some of the greatest minds of the Western world, as seen in Hegelian idealism, Kierkegaardian existentialism, Diltheyan historicism, and Nietzschean perspectivism. The philosophical reflections on the theme of worldview continues to draw the attention of notable figures throughout the twentieth century, the list of names include Edmund Husserl, Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Donald Davidson, however, interest in the concept does not rest in philosophy alone.

In the realm of the Natural Sciences, Michael Polanyi discusses how “the main influence of science on modern man has not been through the advancement of technology, but through the effect of science on our world view” (Naugle, p. 188). Meanwhile, Thomas Kuhn, with his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, has been laying “destructive blows” to the theories of modern science associated with logical positivism.

Closely examined, whether historically or in the contemporary laboratory, that enterprise seems an attempt to force nature into the preformed and relatively inflexible box that the paradigm supplies. No part of the aim of normal science is to call forth new sorts of phenomena; indeed those that will not fit the box are often not seen at all. Nor do scientists normally aim to invent new theories, and they are often intolerant of those invented by others. Instead, normal-scientific research is directed to the articulation of those phenomena and theories that the paradigm already supplies (Naugle, p. 200).

In other words, Kuhn argues that there is a reigning worldview in the scientific community, that “normal science” is conducted paradigmatically.

With respect to the Social Sciences, Naugle states “social scientists are vitally concerned about analyzing and understanding powerful cognitive forces like worldviews that not only undergird the practice of their own disciplines, but radically affect and are a critical component of the human soul (psychology), society (sociology), and culture (anthropology)” (Naugle, p. 210).

In psychology, for example, Sigmund Freud rejected the idea of the formation of worldviews in psychoanalysis and argued that only “scientific knowledge” was worthy of sustained endeavor. It seems Freud did not realize he was arguing for a specific point of view, namely scientism or old line verificationism. Regardless, Freud’s rejection was short lived. In 1942, Carl G. Jung presented “Psychotherapy and a Philosophy of Life” analyzing the relationship between psychotherapy and worldview.

As for sociology, there was no such hurdle to overcome. Karl Mannheim, considered one of the founding fathers of classical sociology, dedicates a lengthy essay to the concept of worldview titled “On the Interpretations of Weltanschauung.” The concept has gone on to capture the attention from the likes of Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels.

The same is true for cultural anthropology. Bronislaw Malinowski, considered one of the most important anthropologists of the twentieth century

because of his pioneering work on ethnographic fieldwork, made this personal statement in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*:

What interests me really in the study of the native is his outlook on things, his Weltanschauung, the breath of life and reality which he breathes and by which he lives. Every human culture gives its members a definitive vision of the world, a definite zest for life. In the roamings over human history, and over the surface of the earth, it is the possibility of seeing life and the world from various angles, peculiar to each culture that has always charmed me most, and inspired me with real desire to penetrate other cultures, to understand other types of life (Naugle, pp. 238-239).

Michael Kearney seems to engender the same spirit in his book *Worldview*. In it, he states one of the primary purposes of his book is to “advance the study of world view” because it “is a subject of immense importance in the social sciences” (Naugle, p. 245). As for Robert Redfield, “World view, of some sort, is as old as the other things that are equally human and that developed along with world view: culture, human nature, and personality” (Naugle, p. 245).

In summary, these three key concepts will help us make sense of the dynamic, non-deterministic, human system of communication. Worldview as a concept has a vast and rich history that underscores how communicated ideas fall into categories of thought, or systems of belief. “Ism” is a key indicator that a worldview is being expressed in some way, shape, or form. These ways, shapes, or forms are communicated through various parts of the “Great Stereopticon,” including newspapers, to manage perceptions in the cognitive domain. This management of perception takes place in the manner in which the media frames a topic or event. For this study, Iraq is our topic. Discussed next will be how focus was brought to this study in order to bring these concepts to bare on a manageable scope. First, will be how we came to choose our worldview.

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III. THE FOCUS

A. CHOOSING A WORLDVIEW

Taking a moment to reflect on the number of 'isms' that have been encountered thus far, one comes to the conclusion that there are a multitude of worldviews to consider. In 2001, Professors Barry Kosmin and Egon Mayer from the City University of New York (CUNY) set out to determine the breakdown of religious worldviews in the U.S. through a program titled the American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS). Here is their self-described methodology:

[B]ased on a random digit-dialed telephone survey of 50,281 American residential households in the continental U.S.A. (48 states). Respondents were asked to describe themselves in terms of religion with an open-ended question. Interviewers did not prompt or offer a suggested list of potential answers. Moreover, the self-description of respondents was not based on whether established religious bodies, institutions, churches, mosques, or synagogues considered them to be members. Quite the contrary, the survey sought to determine whether the respondents themselves regarded themselves as adherents of a religious community. Subjective rather than objective standards of religious identification were tapped by the survey (Kosmin, p. 6).

The breakdown of religious affiliation from the 50,000+ respondents was placed into percentage form. These percentages-per-group were then applied to the total adult population (18+ years of age) in the U.S. for 2001. The figure below reflects the ARIS 2001 results as compared to an earlier survey done in 1990.

**Self Described Religious Identification of U.S. Adult Population,
1990-2001**

(Weighted Estimate)

**TOTAL U.S. ADULT
POPULATION 18+**

1990 = 175,440,000

2001=207,980,000

| Christian Religious Groups | 1990 | | 2001 | |
|--|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % |
| Catholic | 46,004,000 | | 50,873,000 | 24.5 |
| Baptist | 33,964,000 | | 33,830,000 | 16.3 |
| Protestant - no denomination supplied | 17,214,000 | | 4,647,000 | 2.2 |
| Methodist/Wesleyan | 14,174,000 | | 14,150,000 | 6.8 |
| Lutheran | 9,110,000 | | 9,580,000 | 4.6 |
| Christian - no denomination supplied | 8,073,000 | | 14,190,000 | 6.8 |
| Presbyterian | 4,985,000 | | 5,596,000 | 2.7 |
| Pentecostal/Charismatic | 3,191,000 | | 4,407,000 | 2.1 |
| Episcopalian/Anglican | 3,042,000 | | 3,451,000 | 1.7 |
| Mormon/Latter-Day Saints | 2,487,000 | | 2,787,000 | 1.3 |
| Churches of Christ | 1,769,000 | | 2,503,000 | 1.2 |
| Jehovah's Witness | 1,381,000 | | 1,331,000 | 0.6 |
| Seventh-Day Adventist | 668,000 | | 724,000 | 0.3 |
| Assemblies of God | 660,000 | | 1,106,000 | 0.5 |
| Holiness/Holy | 610,000 | | 569,000 | 0.3 |
| Congregational/United Church of Christ | 599,000 | | 1,378,000 | 0.7 |
| Church of the Nazarene | 549,000 | | 544,000 | 0.3 |
| Church of God | 531,000 | | 944,000 | 0.5 |
| Orthodox (Eastern) | 502,000 | | 645,000 | |
| Evangelical | 242,000 | | 1,032,000 | 0.5 |
| Menmonite | 235,000 | | 346,000 | |
| Christian Science | 214,000 | | 194,000 | |
| Church of the Brethren | 206,000 | | 358,000 | |
| Born Again | 204,000 | | 56,000 | |
| Nondenominational | 195,000 | | 2,489,000 | 1.2 |
| Disciples of Christ | 144,000 | | 492,000 | |
| Reformed/Dutch Reform | 161,000 | | 289,000 | |
| Apostolic/New Apostolic | 117,000 | | 254,000 | |
| Quaker | 67,000 | | 217,000 | |
| Full Gospel | 51,000 | | 168,000 | |
| Christian Reform | 40,000 | | 79,000 | |
| Foursquare Gospel | 28,000 | | 70,000 | |
| Fundamentalist | 27,000 | | 61,000 | |
| Salvation Army | 27,000 | | 25,000 | |
| Independent Christian Church | 25,000 | | 71,000 | |
| TOTAL Christian | 151,225,00 | 86.2 | 159,030,000 | 76.5 |

| Other Religion Groups | 1990 | | | 2001 | |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------|--|------------------|------------|
| | Number | % | | Number | % |
| Jewish | 3,137,000 | | | 2,831,000 | 1.3 |
| Muslim/Islamic | 527,000 | | | 1,104,000 | 0.5 |
| Buddhist | 401,000 | | | 1,082,000 | 0.5 |
| Unitarian/Universalist | 502,000 | | | 629,000 | 0.3 |
| Hindu | 227,000 | | | 766,000 | 0.4 |
| Native American | 47,000 | | | 103,000 | |
| Scientologist | 45,000 | | | 55,000 | |
| Baha'I | 28,000 | | | 84,000 | |
| Taoist | 23,000 | | | 40,000 | |
| New Age | 20,000 | | | 68,000 | |
| Eckankar | 18,000 | | | 26,000 | |
| Rastafarian | 14,000 | | | 11,000 | |
| Sikh | 13,000 | | | 57,000 | |
| Wiccan | 8,000 | | | 134,000 | |
| Deity | 6,000 | | | 49,000 | |
| Druid | | | | 33,000 | |
| Santeria | | | | 22,000 | |
| Pagan | | | | 140,000 | |
| Spiritualist | | | | 116,000 | |
| Ethical Culture | | | | 4,000 | |
| Other unclassified | 837,000 | | | 386,000 | |
| Total Other Religions | 5,853,000 | 3.3 | | 7,740,000 | 3.7 |

| No Religion Groups | 1990 | | | 2001 | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|--|-------------------|-------------|
| | Number | % | | Number | % |
| Atheist | | | | 902,000 | 0.4 |
| Agnostic | 1186000 | | | 991,000 | 0.5 |
| Humanist | 29,000 | | | 49,000 | 0 |
| Secular | | | | 53,000 | 0 |
| No Religion | 13,116,000 | | | 27,486,000 | 13.2 |
| Total No Religion Specified | 14,331,000 | 8.2 | | 29,481,000 | 14.1 |
| | | | | | |
| Refused | 4,031,000 | 2.3 | | 11,246,000 | 5.4 |

Figure 1. AIRS, 2000 Survey Results

The most important point this survey makes is not the representative numbers for each religious group. What is of particular interest from this survey is the number of 'isms' from such a small sample of the population; from Christian Fundamentalism to Judaism, Buddhism to Hinduism, Deism to Paganism, Atheism to Secularism. It can be argued that these numbers are, at best, highly suspect due to the simple fact that randomly selecting phone numbers of less than 0.0002% of the U.S. adult population is a weak sample. Even though there are many denominations that fall under Christianity (35 in this study), there are another twenty groups in the "Other Religious Group" category

and five more under “No Religious Group.” Keep in mind the goal of this study is to focus on one particular system of belief, but with a potentially uneven spread (76% Christian verses 4% Other) how do we select a group within this country where the overwhelming majority-worldview does not permeate any of the systems of belief from the other categories? Since this very significant task falls outside the scope of this thesis and some worldviews are obviously more prevalent than others are, authoritative sources were sought to at least narrow down the choices.

This was done by seeking out those who, be it authors, lectures, organizations, philosophers, or theologians, had

- 1) compared and contrasted a manageable number of worldviews (say, no more than 20),
- 2) offered reasons for choosing these worldviews for their analysis, and
- 3) those reasons would include a supported claim that their selected worldviews were the most common in our society.

This search turned up many promising resources with three of particular interest. The first was a book by Kenneth Richard Samples called *A World of Difference: Putting Christian Truth-Claims to the Worldview Test*. Second, was a textbook by Dr. James W. Sire, titled *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. Finally, an organization called *Summit Ministries* located at www.summit.org offered a worldview chart and dictionary that allows viewers to make there own assessment.

1. Analyzing the Resources

a. *A World of Difference*

Mr. Samples holds degrees in philosophy, social science, and theological studies, and currently lectures for the Master of Arts program in

Christian Apologetics at Biola University and at Providence Christian College. Although Samples positions is decidedly Christian, he does present a series of nine test to evaluate and compare four competitive worldviews – Islam, Naturalism, Postmodernism, and Pantheistic Monism – to his own.

Without a doubt, this is a manageable number of worldviews; however, what reasons does Samples offer for choosing these ‘isms’? A brief reading of the books found no supported claims that these systems of belief were the top five in our current society. What was made clear about these ‘isms’ is that they are considered by Samples to be the most competitive to the Christian worldview. This begs the question: Why are they the most competitive? Upon what set of standards do these ‘isms’ offer a compelling and competitive case for each and against one another? Mr. Samples offers two reasons.

First, Samples argues that six specific areas of belief make up the “conceptual heart” of any worldview. These six areas, according to Samples, “should not be viewed in isolation but as unfolding integral parts that overlap and influence each other” (Samples, pp. 23-27). The list is as follows:

1. Theology (Concept of God)
2. Metaphysics (View of External Reality, Especially the Cosmos)
3. Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge)
4. Axiology (Study of Values)
5. Humanity (View of Human Nature)
6. History (Study of Unfolding Historical Events)

Second, there are nine tests that can be used. Samples states that these tests can be applied to the overall ideas developed from these six areas of belief that make up the worldview (Samples, pp. 32-37). Following is a brief description each test:

1. Coherence Test: Is a particular worldview logically consistent?
2. Balance Test: Is the worldview properly balanced between simplicity and complexity?
3. Explanatory power and scope: How well does a worldview explain the facts of reality (“power”), and how wide is the range of its explanation (“scope”)?
4. Correspondence Test: Does a particular worldview correspond with well established, empirical facts, and does it correspond to a person’s experience in the world?
5. Verification Test: Can the central truth-claims of the worldview be verified or falsified?
6. Pragmatic Test: Does the worldview promote relevant, practical, and workable results?
7. Existential Test: Does the worldview address the internal needs of humanity?
8. Cumulative Test: Is the worldview supported by multiple lines of converging evidence that together add increasing support for its truth-claims and extend the breadth of its explanatory power?
9. Competitive Competence Test: Can the worldview successfully compete in the marketplace of ideas?

Together the six areas of belief and the nine tests offer a substantive case for their competitiveness in the marketplace of ideas. Consider this in light of the lopsided percentages gathered by the ARIS 2001 survey, which assigned the vast majority of respondents under Christianity (76%). If it follows that 76% of 50,000 randomly selected respondents is reflective of the total adult population, even roughly, perhaps Samples is in a position to determine a select number of worldviews that offer the most compelling cases for consideration.

b. *The Universe Next Door*

Dr. James Sire received his PhD from the University of Missouri, is a former editor of InterVarsity Press, has taught English, philosophy, theology and short courses at multiple universities, and is currently an active speaker and writer. In *The Universe Next Door*, Sire takes on a handful of worldviews as well – Christian Theism, Deism, Naturalism, Nihilism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, The New Age, and Postmodernism. Like Samples, Sire, too, presents a sort of test to be applied to each ‘ism’ (Sire, pp. 20-21). Sire’s “tests” consist of seven questions:

1. What is prime reality?
2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?
3. What is a human being?
4. What happens to a person at death?
5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
6. How do we know what is right and wrong?
7. What is the meaning of human history?

Sire argues that the “essential, rock bottom answers” to these questions can help one determine the worth of any worldview and offers the following as to why these questions should be considered:

When stated in such a sequence, these questions boggle the mind. Either the answers are obvious to us and we wonder why anyone would bother to ask such questions, or else we wonder how any of them can be answered with any certainty. If we feel the answers are too obvious to consider, then we have a worldview, but we have no idea that many others do not share it. We should realize that we live in a pluralistic world. What is obvious to us may be “a lie from hell” to our neighbor next door. Alternatively, if we feel that none of the questions can be answered without cheating or committing intellectual suicide, we have already adopted a sort of worldview – a form of skepticism, which in its extreme form leads to nihilism.

The fact is that we cannot avoid assuming some answers to such questions. We will adopt either one stance or another. Refusing to adopt an explicit worldview will turn out to be itself a worldview, or at least a philosophical position. In short, we are caught. So long as we live, we will live either the examined or the unexamined life (Sire, p. 21).

With that said, Sire goes on to present each particular worldviews' response to the list of questions, addressing major issues within the responses along the way, however, he never explicitly states why he chose these 'isms' to begin with. Upon further examination, it seems the answer may lie in the preface of the book.

In the preface, Sire explains that when this book was first published in 1976 New Age was gaining traction but had yet to acquire this title. Back then he called it "the new consciousness." Furthermore, at that time, Postmodernism could only be found in academic circles and "had yet to be recognized as an intellectually significant shift" (Sire, p. 9). Though still in their popular-infancy, so to speak, Sire included them in his catalog. Moreover, Sire addressed questions as to why he leaves certain views out, particularly Islam. He makes clear how Islam is a "major worldview now affecting the West" and how it "has become a major factor of life not only in the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia but in Europe and North America as well" (Sire, p. 12). His reason for leaving it out is simple, stating, "I am not prepared at this time to address the Islamic worldview in the way it should be addressed...this must be done by those with a much better understanding than I" (Sire, p. 12). Based on the preface, it seems our answer as to why he chose these worldviews is simple as well. Dr. Sire has written about those 'isms' he has come to know and understand through his personal and academic life.

c. *Summit Ministries*

Dr. David A. Noebel is the founder and president of Summit Ministries located in Manitou Springs, CO. He has been a college professor,

college president, and candidate for the U.S. Congress. Dr. Noebel founded this organization in 1962 for the purpose of educating young Christians about the various worldviews they can encounter and how these views compare to Christianity. The website located at www.summit.org is an extension of this organization that offers a wealth of resources for analyzing competing worldviews regardless of religious affiliation. Of the numerous resources, the most notable is the Worldview Chart.

The chart, located at www.summit.org/resources/worldview_chart/, is “an outlined comparison of the six major western worldviews along ten disciplines” and is shown in the figure below. The six worldviews along with the ten disciplines are brought together to form an interactive matrix. Each item on the matrix links you to a definition or explanation, some with examples and recommendations for comparison, with respect to a single system of belief and discipline.

| | Biblical Christianity | Islam | Secular Humanism | Marxism – Leninism | Cosmic Humanist | Postmodernism |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Source | <i>Bible</i> | <i>Qur'an, Hadith, Sunnah</i> | <i>Humanist Manifesto I, II & III</i> | <i>Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao</i> | <i>MacLaine, Spangler, Chopra, Walsch</i> | <i>Nietzsche, Foucault, Derrida, Rorty</i> |
| Theology | Theism (Trinitarian) | Theism (Unitarian) | Atheism | Atheism | Pantheism | Atheism |
| Philosophy | Supernaturalism (Faith and Reason) | Supernaturalism (Faith and Reason) | Naturalism | Dialectical Materialism | Non-Naturalism | Anti-Realism |
| Ethics | Moral Absolutes | Moral Absolutes | Moral Relativism | Proletariat Morality | Moral Relativism (Karma) | Cultural Relativism |
| Biology | Creationism | Creationism | Neo-Darwinian Evolution | Punctuated Evolution | Cosmic Evolution | Punctuated Evolution |
| Psychology | Mind/Body Dualism (Fallen) | Mind/Body Dualism (Un-fallen) | Monism (Self-Actualization) | Monism (Behaviorism) | Higher Consciousness | Socially-Constructed Selves |
| Sociology | Traditional Family, Church, State | Polygamy, Mosque, Islamic State | Non-traditional Family, Church, State | Classless Society | Non-traditional Family, Church, State | Sexual Egalitarianism |
| Law | Divine/Natural Law | Shari'ah Law | Positive Law | Proletariat Law | Self-Law | Critical Legal Studies |
| Politics | Justice, Freedom, Order | Islamic Theocracy (Global Islam) | Liberalism (Secular World Government) | Statism (Communist World Government) | Self-Government (New World Order) | Leftism |
| Economics | Stewardship of Property | Stewardship of Property | Interventionism | Communism | Universal Enlightened Production | Interventionism |
| History | Creation, Fall, Redemption | Historical Determinism (Jihad) | Historical Evolution | Historical Materialism | Evolutionary Godhood | Historicism |

Table 1. Worldview Chart

Found among these resources is a categorized list of fact sheets. Included are fact sheets for each worldview on the Worldview Chart. Not every fact sheet was formatted the same way nor was the same type of information presented. For example, the fact sheets for Islam, Marxism, and Postmodernism presented some rough statistics of their respective presence in the world and/or influence in contemporary thought. As for New Age and Secular Humanism, no such statistics were presented. Therefore, it is not entirely clear as to how Summit Ministries concluded that they had outlined the “six major western

worldviews” for the Worldview Chart. It was assumed that, like Samples book, these worldviews are considered competitors with Christianity in the market place of ideas.

2. Worldview Identified: Islam

In analyzing of the above resources, it was discovered that some of the same worldviews were consistently listed. The figure below is a summary of those views.

| | Samples | Sire | Noebel |
|--------------------|---------|------|--------|
| Christianity | √ | √ | √ |
| Deism | | √ | |
| Existentialism | | √ | |
| Islam | √ | | √ |
| Marxism-Leninism | | | √ |
| Naturalism | √ | √ | |
| New Age | | √ | √ |
| Nihilism | | √ | |
| Pantheistic Monism | √ | √ | |
| Postmodernism | √ | √ | √ |
| Secular Humanism | | | √ |

Table 2. Breakdown of Worldviews Covered by Each Author

Christianity was discussed in every resource, but this was of no surprise considering all three authors were Christians arguing in favor of their point of view. An Amish community appeared to be a promising choice but when one considers the Christian doctrine, across all denominations there appear to be more similarities than there are differences. Christianity was not considered an option due the numerous denominations and the, presumed, difficulty in finding a separate and distinct population among the average citizen.

Postmodernism was listed just as often but it too was not a good option for one primary reason. There are no data available (i.e. demographics) on Postmodernist. This left Islam, Naturalism, New Age, and Pantheistic Monism, each discussed in two of the three resources. Like Postmodernism, there were

no demographic data for the Naturalist, the New Ager, or the Pantheistic Monist. This process of elimination ended with Islam as the only option available for the focus of this study.

B. FINDING A LOCATION

1. Demographics

a. Muslims in the United States

What favored Islam as the choice of worldview for this study were several surveys that had been conducted to determine the number of Muslims in the U.S., numbers which had been challenged and vetted by experts. Dr. Tom Smith, from the University of Chicago and considered an expert in survey research that specializes in the study of social change and survey methodology, analyzed these surveys. Smith concluded that the resulting estimates “varied greatly”, were “seldom based on any credible scientific methodology”, and appear to be “undergoing inflation of late, rising a million from the average claim in 1996-2001 of 5.65 million to post-September 11 average figure of 6.7 million” (Smith). At first glance this appeared to be damning evidence, but he went on to discuss the best, adjusted, survey-based estimates and ended by saying “the average number being cited by the media at present (6.7 million) is 2.4 to 3.6 times greater than the best available estimates (1.9-2.8 million)” (Smith). Regardless of the flaws of past surveys, these numbers represent a reasonable range with which to begin our study.

b. Arabs in the United States

It is of conventional wisdom that the vast majority of Arabs across the globe are Muslims. If this is indeed true, then it is quite possible that the majority of Arabs in the U.S. are Muslims as well. Based on this line of logic, demographic data of Arabs in the U.S. was collected as well. The next step was to determine where these “numbers” resided.

2. Location Identified: Dearborn, MI

Conducted in 2001, the best, adjusted, estimates of the number of Muslims in the U.S. are 1.9 to 2.8 million. According to the Census 2000 Brief, the total Arab population is at 1.2 million. With the conventional wisdom of 'most Arabs being Muslim,' these seemingly conflicting numbers did not give cause for concern because what one chooses to believe is not an innate trait like race or gender nor was it assumed that 100% of the Arab population in the U.S. were Muslim. It was assumed that the majority of Arabs in the U.S. align themselves with the Islamic faith. This assumption then allowed for further reliance on the Census brief to locating places of interest for this study.

The Census brief was integral to identifying a location. In it was a chart titled *Arab Populations in Selected Places*, which can be seen in the following figure. Among the 'Ten Places With Largest Arab Population' is Dearborn, MI. Note the 'Percentage Arab' for this city; one third of the entire population. This is by far the highest concentration of Arabs anywhere in the U.S. as indicated in the figure below.

| Place | Total population | Arab population | | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| | | Number | 90-percent confidence interval | Percent Arab | 90-percent confidence interval |
| Ten Largest Places | | | | | |
| New York, NY | 8,008,278 | 69,985 | 68,241 - 71,729 | 0.87 | 0.85 - 0.90 |
| Los Angeles, CA | 3,694,834 | 25,673 | 24,557 - 26,789 | 0.69 | 0.66 - 0.73 |
| Chicago, IL | 2,895,964 | 14,777 | 14,108 - 15,446 | 0.51 | 0.49 - 0.53 |
| Houston, TX | 1,954,848 | 11,128 | 10,393 - 11,863 | 0.57 | 0.53 - 0.61 |
| Philadelphia, PA | 1,517,550 | 5,227 | 4,829 - 5,625 | 0.34 | 0.32 - 0.37 |
| Phoenix, AZ | 1,320,994 | 5,098 | 4,600 - 5,596 | 0.39 | 0.35 - 0.42 |
| San Diego, CA | 1,223,341 | 7,357 | 6,759 - 7,955 | 0.60 | 0.55 - 0.65 |
| Dallas, TX | 1,188,204 | 4,077 | 3,632 - 4,522 | 0.34 | 0.31 - 0.38 |
| San Antonio, TX | 1,144,554 | 3,748 | 3,321 - 4,175 | 0.33 | 0.29 - 0.36 |
| Detroit, MI | 951,270 | 8,287 | 7,787 - 8,787 | 0.87 | 0.82 - 0.92 |
| Ten Places With Largest Arab Population | | | | | |
| New York, NY | 8,008,278 | 69,985 | 68,241 - 71,729 | 0.87 | 0.85 - 0.90 |
| Dearborn, MI | 97,775 | 29,181 | 28,392 - 29,970 | 29.85 | 29.04 - 30.65 |
| Los Angeles, CA | 3,694,834 | 25,673 | 24,557 - 26,789 | 0.69 | 0.66 - 0.73 |
| Chicago, IL | 2,895,964 | 14,777 | 14,108 - 15,446 | 0.51 | 0.49 - 0.53 |
| Houston, TX | 1,954,848 | 11,128 | 10,393 - 11,863 | 0.57 | 0.53 - 0.61 |
| Detroit, MI | 951,270 | 8,287 | 7,787 - 8,787 | 0.87 | 0.82 - 0.92 |
| San Diego, CA | 1,223,341 | 7,357 | 6,759 - 7,955 | 0.60 | 0.55 - 0.65 |
| Jersey City, NJ | 240,055 | 6,755 | 6,219 - 7,291 | 2.81 | 2.59 - 3.04 |
| Boston, MA | 589,141 | 5,845 | 5,341 - 6,349 | 0.99 | 0.91 - 1.08 |
| Jacksonville, FL | 735,503 | 5,751 | 5,251 - 6,251 | 0.78 | 0.71 - 0.85 |
| Ten Places of 100,000 or More Population With Highest Percent Arab | | | | | |
| Sterling Heights, MI | 124,471 | 4,598 | 4,157 - 5,039 | 3.69 | 3.34 - 4.05 |
| Jersey City, NJ | 240,055 | 6,755 | 6,219 - 7,291 | 2.81 | 2.59 - 3.04 |
| Warren, MI | 138,276 | 3,470 | 3,149 - 3,791 | 2.51 | 2.28 - 2.74 |
| Allentown, PA | 106,632 | 2,613 | 2,279 - 2,947 | 2.45 | 2.14 - 2.76 |
| Burbank, CA | 100,316 | 2,395 | 2,057 - 2,733 | 2.39 | 2.05 - 2.72 |
| Glendale, CA | 195,047 | 4,028 | 3,589 - 4,467 | 2.07 | 1.84 - 2.29 |
| Livonia, MI | 100,545 | 1,953 | 1,712 - 2,194 | 1.94 | 1.70 - 2.18 |
| Arlington, VA | 189,453 | 3,352 | 2,972 - 3,732 | 1.77 | 1.57 - 1.97 |
| Paterson, NJ | 149,222 | 2,634 | 2,297 - 2,971 | 1.77 | 1.54 - 1.99 |
| Daly City, CA | 103,549 | 1,752 | 1,462 - 2,042 | 1.69 | 1.41 - 1.97 |

Table 3. U.S. Census, 2000, Ten Places With Largest Arab Population

Since it was quite possible that the majority of Arabs in Dearborn, MI were not Muslim, further research was done to ensure this was not the case. Following are several important points that seem to dispel this possibility.

Based on a report published by the State Departments' Office of International Information Programs, titled "Muslim Life in America," Dearborn has "long been home to both Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims from many parts of the Middle East...[and] having formed a community, they have been joined by other Muslims." To take this point further, located in Dearborn is the largest mosque in North America, called the Islamic Center of America. This institution was established in 1963 but the history of the Islamic community in Dearborn dates

back to 1949 with the arrival of the first Imam, Jawad Chirri, and his followers. For these reasons, Dearborn was chosen as the site of this study.

C. FINDING LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

1. Narrowing the Search

ePodunk.com is a website that provides information about more than 46,000 communities around the country and was founded by journalists with experience in newspapers, online publishing, and demographics. With Dearborn, MI as our location of interest, ePodunk produced a wealth of categorized links for follow-on information, from the arts to wildlife, books to restaurants, and communities to media outlets – 45 categories in all.

Located under “Media Outlets” was the link “Daily newspapers in or near Dearborn.” This link produced the results seen in the following figure. Since Dearborn is located in Wayne County, this list of 25 newspapers was narrowed down to the 15 within this county.

| Search results (25) | |
|---|--|
| Ann Arbor News, Washtenaw County, MI | Macomb Daily, Macomb County, MI |
| Belleville Enterprise, Wayne County, MI | Milan News-Leader, Washtenaw County, MI |
| Belleville View, Wayne County, MI | Monroe Evening News, Monroe County, MI |
| Canton Eagle, Wayne County, MI | Northville Journal, Wayne County, MI |
| Clarkston News, Oakland County, MI | Oakland Press, Oakland County, MI |
| Daily Tribune, Oakland County, MI | Plymouth Journal, Wayne County, MI |
| Dearborn Press & Guide, Wayne County, MI | Romulus Roman, Wayne County, MI |
| Detroit Free Press, Wayne County, MI | Saint Clair-Macomb Voice, Macomb County, MI |
| Detroit News, Wayne County, MI | Spinal Column Newsweekly, Oakland County, MI |
| Downriver News-Herald, Wayne County, MI | Wayne Eagle, Wayne County, MI |
| Grosse Pointe News, Wayne County, MI | Westland Eagle, Wayne County, MI |
| Ile Camera, Wayne County, MI | Ypsilanti Courier, Washtenaw County, MI |
| Inkster Ledger Star, Wayne County, MI | |

Figure 2. ePodunk Search Results for Newspapers In or Near Dearborn, MI

2. Newspapers Identified

Lexus-Nexus was used to see which of these 15 newspapers were in the database. A search by 'county' was not possible so a search by 'state,' in this case Michigan, was conducted. Only two newspapers, as seen in the figure below, were located – The Detroit Free Press and The Detroit News.

Nexis®

Search Sources History & Alerts

Browse Sources Find Sources

Find Sources

By ☒ Keyword ☐ Alphabet ☐ Source Code

Keyword Find Sources | Edit Find
e.g., "New York Times" or Times New York

Name Select

Publication Type : News>Newspapers
Topics : All Legal Topics;All News & Business Topics;All Industry ...
Region of Coverage : United States>Michigan
Publication Languages : All Languages
Frequency of Update : All Frequencies

1 Filter : All Available Sources 1-18 of 18 Sources
Pricing Go to Page Starting with Source: Ann Arbor News (Michigan)

2 Select sources below to search

- ☐ Ann Arbor News (Michigan)
- ☐ Battle Creek Enquirer (Michigan)
- ☐ Bay City Times (Michigan)
- ☐ Crain's Detroit Business
- ☐ Detroit Free Press
- ☐ Detroit Free Press - Most Recent Two Weeks
- ☐ The Detroit News (Michigan)
- ☐ Flint Journal (Michigan)
- ☐ Grand Rapids Press (Michigan)
- ☐ Jackson Citizen Patriot
- ☐ Kalamazoo Gazette (Michigan)
- ☐ Lansing State Journal (Michigan)
- ☐ Michigan Chronicle
- ☐ Michigan Lawyers Weekly
- ☐ Midwest Regional Stories - Most Recent Two Weeks
- ☐ Muskegon Chronicle (Michigan)
- ☐ Saginaw News (Michigan)

Figure 3. Nexis Search Results of Newspapers in Michigan

At this point, there was a concern that these two papers might be too similar in view and scope, and therefore, framing, that another search for newspapers in Dearborn was conducted. This final search turned up a very interesting find – The Arab American News headquartered out of Dearborn, MI.

The Arab American News has been in print for the past 23 years. The paper touts “expert local, national and international political analyses.” They also “showcase news and features from all over the Arab World, including social, political, cultural and religious themes [and] focus on the Arab American community.” (Arab American News web site, About Us)

These three papers – The Detroit Free Press, The Detroit News, and The Arab American News – appeared ideal for this study. The first two newspapers account for the vast majority of circulation throughout Michigan, not to mention they operated out of Wayne County as well. This fact was discovered through the Audit Bureau of Circulations web site, see figure below.

| Preliminary figures subject to audit as filed with the Audit Bureau of Circulations. | | | | |
|--|--------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| * Total Circulation = Total Average Paid Circulation | | | | |
| Publication Name | Frequency | Circulation Type | Total Circulation* | Filing Status |
| FREE PRESS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | SUN | DLY | 606,374 | |
| FREE PRESS/NEWS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | AVG CMBD DLY | DLY | 497,115 | |
| FREE PRESS/NEWS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | CMBD SAT | DLY | 460,588 | |
| FREE PRESS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | AVG M (M-F) | DLY | 308,944 | |
| FREE PRESS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | SAT | DLY | 288,231 | |
| NEWS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | AVG M (M-F) | DLY | 188,171 | |
| PRESS, GRAND RAPIDS (KENT CO.) | SUN | DLY | 177,026 | |
| NEWS, DETROIT (WAYNE CO.) | SAT | DLY | 172,357 | |

Figure 4. Audit Bureau of Circulations for Michigan Newspapers

As for the Arab American News, this paper was ideal for two reasons. First, not only was it located in Wayne County but it also operated out of

Dearborn. Second, this paper is specifically directed at an ethnic background with particularly close ties with our worldview of interest.

D. FINDING ARTICLES TO ANALYZE

The Arab American News web site was the basis for finding a common event or topic among the three newspapers. For example, the first article, published on August 22, 2008, by the Arab American News and titled “U.S. officials admit worry over a “difficult” al-Maliki,” dealt primarily with the relationship between the Bush administration and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. Therefore, the event or topic of interest for follow-on searches in the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press was any article published on or near the same date discussing this relationship. Collecting articles from the remaining two newspapers entailed a simple key word search on the Nexus database and newspaper-specific web sites.

Through this process, one additional topic for analysis was found – the U.S. announcing the possibility of handing over the Anbar Province to the Iraqis. The figure below captures the two events chosen for analysis.

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Topic: The relationship between Iraqi PM al-Maliki and the Bush administration | | |
| Word Search: al-Maliki | | |
| News Sources ▼ | Headline ▼ | Date Published ▼ |
| The Arab American News | U.S. OFFICIALS ADMIT WORRY OVER A "DIFFICULT" AL-MALIKI | August 22, 2008 |
| The Detroit News | IRAQI LEADERS INSISTS FOREIGN SOLDIERS MUST GO | August 25, 2008 |
| The Detroit Free Press | IRAQI LEADER'S DEFIANCE RANKLES U.S. OFFICIALS | September 2, 2008 |
| | | |
| Topic: U.S. preparing to hand over Anbar Province to Iraqis | | |
| Word Search: Anbar | | |
| News Sources ▼ | Headline ▼ | Date Published ▼ |
| The Arab American News | U.S. FORCES TO HAND OVER HARD-WON ANBAR PROVINCE? | July 4, 2008 |
| The Detroit News | U.S. TROOPS TO HAND OVER ANBAR PROVINCE | August 28, 2008 |
| The Detroit Free Press | U.S. TO HAND ANBAR BACK TO IRAQIS | August 28, 2008 |

Table 4. Details of Events Located for Analysis

IV. DATA COLLECTION

A. INTERPRETING THE MESSAGE

The style of writing varied greatly among the six articles. Some articles were short and to the point, making it easy to comprehend, others were lengthy and emotive, making it difficult to understand what overall point the author was trying to make.

In order to make sense of the more difficult articles, diagrammatic argumentation software called bCisive™ by Austhink was used. Designed specifically to visually map out one's own or someone else's argument and/or line of reasoning, this software includes predesigned nodes with labels such as, Contention, Evidence, Supporting Argument, Opposing Argument, Rebuttal, etc. The user is then able to link these nodes together according to their relationship.

The application of this software proved so useful that the diagrams developed from each article are presented below with a brief summary. Since the premise behind the use of this software was to visually-represent our system of interpretation, these diagrams along with the summary conclude this portion of the overall analysis.

1. The Relationship between Iraqi PM al-Maliki and the Bush Administration

a. *The Arab American News*

Gareth Porter is the author of "U.S. officials admit worry over a "difficult" al-Maliki." His leading proposition, indicated by the "Contention"-node at the top of [Diagram 1](#), is that al-Maliki is no longer dependent on the Bush administration as he has been in the past. There is only one primary supporting argument behind this contention and the author dedicates the majority of the article defending it. Porter is, without a doubt, arguing a specific point and relies

on “authoritative” sources in the form of statements by a U.S. analyst and unidentified officials to make his case. It is important to note that unsupported contentions are not arguments but mere opinions whether the reader agrees with the claim or not. With respect to this article, the author makes at least seven unsupported claims, which seems to highlight his position on the issue.

In summary, al-Maliki is showing his political independence. As part of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) negotiations, al-Maliki is demanding all U.S. troops withdraw from Iraq by 2011. This is contrary to the goals of the Bush administration and, according to Porter, this is a sign that al-Maliki has the political power to make such demands. Case in point, because of al-Maliki, diplomacy with al-Sadr and the Iranian regime was possible and the inclusion of Sunni-Arabs in the political process has become less of a priority. Al-Maliki is not interested in empowering the “category” of people that once ruled Iraq and supported Saddam Hussein.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 1](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp5.emf)

b. The Detroit News

Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Robert H. Reid co-authored “Iraqi leader insists foreign soldiers must go.” The authors of the article, from the Detroit News, on this issue appear to be more balanced. As can be seen from [Diagram 2](#), the article presents a considerable amount of evidence in each case for and against the potential that an agreement on the status of forces in Iraq will be in the Bush administration’s favor. At first glance, this article appeared to be nothing more than a report on the complexity of the relationship between the Bush administration and al-Maliki’s government. Toward the end of the article though, these authors make a claim that stands out: “It appears al-Maliki was seeking to bolster his nationalist credentials ahead of provincial elections late this year and a national ballot in 2009.” This is the primary claim behind the article.

In summary, the authors do not support their primary claim very well; to come to this conclusion logically a reader would have to try to make the connection on his own from the evidence presented or the he would have to provide his own views and evidence to fill in the gaps. The primary point of the article is the fact that officials from both sides agreed tentatively to the “possibility that a residual U.S. force might stay behind to continue training and advising Iraqi security services.” The supporting evidence and arguments that follow do not lead logically to the claim that al-Maliki’s main goal is to win votes for the upcoming election. What the author does accomplish is a contrast of goals between the representative parties of each country and casts doubt on a favorable outcome.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 2](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp1.emf)

c. *The Detroit Free Press*

The Detroit Free Press article titled “Iraqi leader’s defiance rankles U.S. officials,” argues that the Bush administration is worried that al-Maliki’s success is making him less amenable to their goals with respect to troops in Iraq. (See [Diagram 3](#)) Statements from officials from the U.S. and those close to al-Maliki are supportive to this claim. For the most part this article reads like an objective report of the situation, but it does include several unsupported claims. The author asserts that al-Maliki does not appreciate the security situation on the ground and that he is pressing the U.S. to increase its arms sales to Iraq and to “bolster” the country’s air force. He also asserts that “Maliki realizes that his security forces still need help” and U.S. officials had been “glossing over the disputes” that have now become a controversial issue. All of this may be true but no evidence of any kind was presented.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 3](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp6.emf)

2. U.S. Preparing to Hand Over Anbar Province to Iraqis

a. *The Arab American News*

Sam Dagher authored “U.S. forces to hand over hard-won Anbar Province?” The main argument in this article is that recent attacks within the Anbar province highlights how fragile security in this region is and that recent attacks bring into question the readiness of Iraqi security forces to assume greater responsibility. (See [Diagram 4](#)) Fallujah has been often reference in the overall success of Iraq. Dagher takes issue with Fallujah as an example of success pointing out that the suicide bomber in Garmah was wearing an Iraqi police uniform, claims of harsh treatment of citizens in Fallujah by the local police force, and misuse, abuse, and poorly planned use of funds provided by the U.S. to Iraqis for reconstruction efforts. Included, are a few supported arguments about “power struggles” that remain among “newly empowered tribal chieftains and political parties” but not much attention and effort was give to these issues by the author.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 4](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp2.emf)

b. *The Detroit News*

“U.S. troops to hand over Anbar province,” by Robert Burns, reports the conditions on the ground in Iraq as “dramatically improved” and could lead to more troop withdrawals in the fall. Because of the lack of fighting taking place in Iraq, Afghanistan has “supplanted Iraq as a front-line battleground.” Therefore, troops freed up from Iraq could lead to more troops being committed to the fight in Afghanistan. This article is concise and to the point, as [Diagram 5](#) indicates, and is the most objective report in this study.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 5](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp4.emf)

c. *The Detroit Free Press*

The Detroit Free Press article is almost a mirror image of the report from the Detroit News. This is no surprise considering Robert Burns wrote both, however, there is a difference in that the Free Press article is more emotive than the previous one. According to Burns, in the Detroit Free Press, U.S. commanders call it an “urgent need for more troops in Afghanistan.” (See [Diagram 6](#)) This claim aside, Burns used the same supporting arguments and evidence found in the Detroit News. The idea of “urgency” is unsupported but this article too is concise and to the point.

(If the hyperlink for [Diagram 6](#) does not work, use the following URL: http://theses.nps.navy.mil/08Sep_NorrisApp3.emf)

B. FRAME ANALYSIS

1. The Relationship Between Iraqi PM al-Maliki and the Bush Administration

a. *The Arab American News*

For Porter the problem is that political progress in Iraq has stalled. This is due to the Bush administrations goals - insistence that the SOFA negotiations include terms for long-term troop presence and legal immunity for U.S. forces, support of Sunni-lead organization against Iran, and accommodating Sunni interest in order to bring them into the political system – which contradict al-Maliki’s political objectives.

Deciphering the moral judgment proved very difficult. Simply put, nowhere does Porter overtly point at something and say that it is wrong, however, as stated earlier, his numerous unsupported claims seems to highlight what judgment he is implying. These assertions favor al-Maliki’s actions.

Therefore, the moral judgment is that the Bush administration is wrong for supporting Sunni Arabs and insisting long-term troop presence at the cost of political progress for Iraq.

The solution is just as elusive as the moral judgment and for the same reasons. Porter does not offer up directly what should be done to correct this wrong, however, for one to come to a reasonable conclusion about a solution an author might have in mind, we only need consider the antithesis of the error presented in the moral judgment. In this case, if al-Maliki has managed to work with Iran to neutralize al-Sadr, “the most potent political-military threat” to Iraq’s stability, then the U.S. should not be seeking goals that diminish such progress.

b. The Detroit News

The problems highlighted in this article are the differences in political objectives between al-Maliki and Bush. What brought this problem to the surface were public remarks by al-Maliki opposing a SOFA that would include legal immunity for troops and a long-term U.S. presence, with basing rights, in Iraq.

The primary and weakly supported claim that al-Maliki made these remarks to “bolster his nationalist credentials” along with the assertion (i.e. unsupported claim) that his “Shi’ite allies face a strong challenge from followers of anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr” indicate that the authors find al-Maliki in the wrong.

This article, though it is a negative one for al-Maliki, is not very emotive. Because of this, it would be a stretch to say the authors were implying a specific solution. It is safe to say they disagree with al-Maliki.

c. The Detroit Free Press

The problem in this report is that American officials are worried. This concern is a result of al-Maliki’s public demands for a timetable for

withdrawal of U.S. troops and his resistance to legal immunity for these troops. Even though there are several assertions made in the article, there are opinions about both sides on this issue. This article may lack evidence but overall it is balanced and is, therefore, no more than a report of the problems in the negotiations process between the Bush administration and al-Maliki's government. No moral judgment or solution, for that matter, was drawn from this report.

2. U.S. Preparing to Hand Over Anbar Province to Iraqis

a. The Arab American News

Though the U.S. has had success in the Anbar province, the problem is that danger in the province is still visible. This problem, according to Dagher, has been underscored by a bombing in Garmah that killed 20 people, the purported harsh conduct of the local police in Fallujah, the Sunni strongholds of Diyala and Nineveh and their association with "the Sunni Arab insurgency" that still exists, and lack of fiscal accountability in reconstruction efforts funded by the U.S.

The moral judgment in this article is aimed at the success of the U.S. As stated earlier, Dagher highlights problems with the local police force in Fallujah which came in to being with U.S. training and support and is now headed by an "ex-insurgent", he emphasizes "wasteful" spending by the U.S. funding reconstruction projects in the province, and that bitter rivalries "between the newly empowered tribal chieftains and political parties, such as the Islamic Party, risk becoming more violent." All of this implies the U.S. approach to helping Iraq is actually causing problems that are now beginning to surface.

There is no solution to speak of in this article; however, the tone of this article does draw attention to the author's position on American's current efforts in Iraq.

b. *The Detroit News*

Burns' report draws attention to the lack of fighting taking place in the Anbar province. This is a problem for troops, particularly from a Marine's point of view, that are trained to fight. This lack of fighting is a result of an overall successful campaign in this region.

The "moral" judgment in this report is that not so many troops need to be committed to an area where there is little to no fighting taking place. The solution is to send troops freed up from the commitment of Iraq to Afghanistan.

c. *The Detroit Free Press*

Recall that Robert Burns, the author of the Detroit News report, wrote this report as well. These two reports are nearly identical. Therefore, the analysis is the same with a few minor additions. First, Burns claims the need for more troops in Afghanistan is "urgent." Second, as an addition to the moral judgment previously discussed, Burns argues that the military is stretched too thin to fight two wars.

This opinion does two things for this report not seen in the Detroit News. First, it lends support to his claim of urgency for more troops in Afghanistan. Second, it implies a solution to the troops being "stretched too thin."

V. FINDINGS

A. A CORRELATION AMONG PROCESSES

A review of the Interpretation and Frame Analysis brought several important points to the surface. First, there is a clear and logical connection between these two processes. The information and knowledge gained from Interpretation Analysis is very general, while the Frame Analysis is more specific and, by nature, offers more detail about the article and the author(s). Second, because the objective process of interpreting the text is conducted first, it adds weight or justification to the Frame Analysis. In others, an understanding of the article is obtained (via Interpretation Analysis) so that specific and related questions can be reasonably answered (via Frame Analysis).

B. A DISTINCTION OF WORLDVIEWS

A review of the Frame Analysis of our articles shows what details are important to which newspapers. The Arab American News articles clearly and repeatedly make the distinction of who is a Shi'ite and who is a Sunni.

What was immediately apparent from the Frame Analysis was that the Arab American News articles negatively framed the Sunni worldview while positively framing the Shi'ite worldview. For example, in the article about the relationship between Bush and al-Maliki, the Bush administration is wrong for supporting Sunni Arabs and that al-Maliki's relationship with al-Sadr and the Iranian regime (both Shi'ite) has resulted in political progress. As for the article on the hand over of the Anbar provinces, Sunni-dominate areas were referred to as "strongholds" that are affiliated with "Sunni Arab insurgents." Furthermore, an "ex-insurgent" commands the "harsh" police force in Fallujah.

Prompted by this discovery, the "clear and repeated distinction" of worldviews became apparent with another reading of all the articles. Both

articles from the Arab American News delineated who belonged to which system of belief on a regular basis. This distinction can be found only once in another newspaper.

The Detroit Free Press article, titled “Iraqi leader’s defiance rankles U.S. officials,” had this to say:

Once perceived as a sectarian Shi’ite Muslim leader, the U.S.-backed Maliki has won over Sunni constituents in recent months with offensives to curb Shi’ite militias in southern cities such as Basra and Amara and in the Baghdad Shi’ite slum of Sadr City. He then turned his security forces north to wrest control of Mosul and Diyala province from Sunni extremists.

The article went on discussing the defiance of Maliki with respect to U.S. objectives in Iraq, never again making such a distinction.

With the discovery of positive frames for Shi’ite and negative frames for Sunni Muslims in the Arab American News, an effort was made to determine which religious affiliation was the majority in Dearborn, MI.

No demographic data on the number of Sunnis and Shi’ites in Dearborn could be found. What was found were numerous past articles that made the same claim: Shi’ite Muslims are the majority in Dearborn, MI. For example, an article written in 2006 by E.A. Torriero, for the Chicago Tribune, said this:

Community leaders estimate there are 35,000 Arab-Americans in Dearborn out of 100,000 residents. Of the Arabs, they say, up to 80 percent are Lebanese-Americans, and 90 percent of them are Shi’ite Muslims from southern Lebanon. The remainder are Sunni, Christian or secular, they say (Torriero).

Another article, from NPR’s Guy Raz, also stated “in Dearborn, the majority are Shi’ite Muslims from southern Lebanon and Iraq” (Raz). He also pointed to the fact that the Islamic Center in Dearborn is the largest Shi’ite mosque in the country. With a brief look at the history between these two sects and the findings noted above, a conclusion to this study was made.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

A. WORLDVIEWS AND FRAMING IN THE MEDIA

There are two main branches in Islam, Sunni and Shi'ite. The reason for these two primary sects dates back to around the time of Muhammad's death, in 632 A.D. At this time, there was much discussion as to who the next successor as the head of Islam would be. These two sects debate as to whether Muhammad had appointed a successor prior to his death. Sunni Muslims argue that he appointed no one and that the successor should be someone who is elected. Their first choice was Abu Bakr, Muhammad's friend and collaborator. Shi'ite Muslims claim Ali ibn Abi Talib, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, was chosen and that the successors must continue to come from Muhammad's bloodline. These are the presuppositions that mark the difference between these two sects and mark the beginning of a violent rift that remains in Islam today.

In summary, the evidence is as follows. History explains the rift between the Shi'ites and the Sunnis. The claim that the majority of Muslims in Dearborn, MI are Shi'ite is well supported. The local Arab American News, located in Dearborn, promotes positive and negative frames, for Shi'ites and Sunnis, respectively. The Detroit News and Detroit Free Press, both located just outside of Dearborn, do not promote one worldview over another with respect to Sunnis and Shi'ites.

The evidence lead us to the reasonable conclusion, in this case, that the local media does indeed was use words and ideas in a manner (i.e. framing) which correlates with a specific area's system of belief.

B. CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

One could argue all that has been proven is that a local newspaper panders to the community in which it resides. This is by no means a major

discovery. What is significant is that we may be able to decipher what worldview or “ism” a community holds to and seeks to be reinforced by the “pandering” media outlet. This study establishes a methodology for deciphering the layers of public information that inform and solidify these views.

Recall that an “ism” is a *system* of thought. In a specific system of thought there are foundational presuppositions, such as in Sunnism that separates it from the Shi’ite worldview. These presuppositions can be stated in propositional form. Propositions are either true or false, obviously for the “believer” they are *the* truth. In a well thought out worldview these foundational truths are linked together some how. For example, the Shiite worldview is a sect of Islam. Now, let us assume for a moment that the Worldview Chart (Table 1) from Summit Ministries is correct. This leads us to the primary sources of the Islamic faith, which are the Qur’an, the Hadith, and Sunnah. If the Sunnis and Shi’ites differ on how the head of Islam is determined, then perhaps these two sects have differing views on the authority of Qur’an and the Hadith, or the meaning behind Sunnah.

A search of ‘Sunnah’ in Wikipedia reveals another set of distinct presuppositions. Sunnah translates literally to “trodden path.” What it is referring to in the Islamic faith is the “sunnah of the prophet” or “the path of the prophet.” “The word ‘Sunnah’ in Sunni Islam means those religious actions that were instituted by the Islamic prophet Muhammad during the 23 years of his ministry and which Muslims initially received through consensus of companions of Muhammad, and further through generation-to-generation transmission.” Whereas for the Shi’ite, “the word ‘Sunnah’ means the deeds, sayings and approvals of Muhammad and the twelve Imams who Shi’a Muslims believe were chosen by Muhammad to lead the Ummah - the world muslim community.”

For the Sunnis, the path of the prophet is about “religious actions.” For the Shiite, these “deeds, sayings and approvals” seem to cover more than just “religious action.” Perhaps this covers the overall ethical conduct of a Muslim. This begs the question, what is the Muslim’s view on ethics. According to the Worldview Chart, Muslims hold to Moral Absolutism with respect to ethics.

If we were seeking to influence the conduct of this Muslim population in Dearborn, MI, be it through handbills, radio, television, or articles in the local newspaper we now have a better understanding where they derive their ethical values. Inserting words like ‘sunnah’ or ‘path’ in a positive frame might make our message more palatable and help create an environment that would support our overall objectives in this area. This further understanding could also prevent us from using language that might sound persuasive to us but is affiliated with a different “ism.” At the very least, we want to be sure to stay with words and ideas that flow from a “moral absolutism” point of view on ethics.

Moral relativism is probably the closest thing to an antithesis of moral absolutism. Dr. James White, in his book *A Mind for God*, explains the basic idea behind moral relativism:

What is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me. What is moral is dictated by a particular situation in light of a particular culture or social location. Moral values become a matter of personal opinion or private judgment rather than something grounded in objective truth (White, pp. 28-29).

What follows from this view on ethical conduct are comments like “who are you to say,” “what if someone told you, you were wrong,” or, especially, “you shouldn’t force your morals on other people.” These ideas of “making up your own mind” may run contrary to the concept of a “community of Muslims” or Ummah. Projecting the idea that Muslims have the freedom to make their own moral judgments might be viewed as a form of apostasy. This could be devastating to a particular Influence Operations or an overall Information Operation campaign.

Understanding worldviews and their related “isms” allows us to determine the words and concepts that follow from them. These words and concepts, properly understood, can be framed in a manner that manages a certain perception. Managed properly, that perception could be a catalyst to a successful operation.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

This system of systems has been applied and proven based on case study of a small city within the United States. The advantages inherent in the location of interest in this study are the wealth of resources available – from demographics to surveys, and databases to web sites. The true test of the methodology here would be to apply it to an area of tactical, operational, or strategic importance outside of the United States. If presuppositions of a particular worldview were found in the media sources of such a location, then this would validate beyond a reasonable doubt the usefulness of this work. With the impending AFRICOM and the Marine Corps' Security Cooperation MAGTF, follow-on studies of African cities might prove very useful to both.

A secondary recommendation for future study seems appropriate considering the usefulness of the diagrammatical argumentation software, bCisive™ by Austhink. Further study of the utility of this type of software should be conducted in order to determine if it can improve effectiveness and efficiency in the areas of decision-making, reasoning, and rhetoric.

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